



INTERCOM



SOCIAL INVESTMENT NEWS

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*MISSION - To help residents of inner cities improve
the quality of their lives to reflect individual
God-given dignity and personal achievement*

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH ADVOCATE PROGRAM

Purpose

To educate women on importance of prenatal care, pediatric care for newborns/toddlers, and continued total family health care.

Why is NHA needed?

- * New Jersey ranks 13th in U.S. for high mortality rates among minorities
- * Blue Ribbon Panel Report on Infant Mortality (9/97) states, for every 1000 white babies born in U.S. in '95, 4.1 died within one month. For every 1000 black babies born in '95, 9.8 died within a month.
- * Inadequate health care is one of the major factors causing low birth rate and infant mortality in New Jersey

How does the NHA Program work?

- * Volunteers are recruited from the community.
- * The health advocate volunteers are provided with educational workshops:
 - Effective Community Canvassing
 - Communication Techniques
 - Educating Clients on Immunization
 - Lead poisoning
 - TB, HIV/Aids
 - Drug Alcohol Abuse
 - Women's Health Issues
 - Domestic Violence (Abused and Abuser)
- Most Volunteers take training in Infant/Adult CPR from Red Cross and Breastfeeding from La Leche League.
- * Twenty active volunteers in the NCC program canvass the community; identify and communicate with prospective clients; distribute educational material containing resources and referrals.
- * Volunteers are in constant contact with clients during pregnancy.

How do clients benefit?

- * Pregnant women are assisted in preparing for delivery, parenting, and child care
- * Bus tickets for doctors or various agencies appointments
(This hands-on community support works well with women who are high risk due to drug or alcohol abuse)
- * Workshops - Caring for Newborn, Basic parenting skills, Self Esteem, Budgeting, Alternative Discipline Methods, Women Support Group, Women's Health Issues, Teen Parenting, Young Fathers Sessions.
- * All clients are followed for a year to ensure their mind set of continued total family health care
- * Access to NCC resources, e.q.
 - Youth Employment Training Program
 - Young Mothers Program of Harmony House
 - Center for Employment Training
 - NHA networks with the young Fathers Program both in Babyland Family Services and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ)

In 1997 the outreach section of the program sponsored five Community Health and Information Fairs.

Free examinations were given for asthma and allergy by UMDNJ; diabetes, high blood pressure, glucose, etc. by East Orange Family Health Center; HIV testing by D.A.R.E. Unit, UMDNJ.

In all, the NCC neighborhood Health Advocate Program serviced 174 pregnant women and 173 others during 1997.

NHA is funded by State of New Jersey Health and Senior Services

Social Investment

New ideas and inventive means of solving problems have been a blessing as well as curse for NCC. We are blessed with creative people who care. We are blessed with many professional resources. However, we are confounded as to how to continue successful programs when funding fades. The program mentioned above is working well. It is funded by NJ State. Neither State nor Foundations, however, can guarantee continued funding or grants. Our welfare reform program and our employment training programs are essential to the economic health of Newark. We appreciate the help of many of you., and we still offer an 8% return for those seeking an alternative investment.

THE AGING OF NEW COMMUNITY

On February 9, 1998 (incorporation date) New Community was 30 years of age. On February 28, 1998, NCC celebrated its birthday with a Gala, a formal dinner-dance. Invitations went to employees, residents, clients, friends, foundations, and corporations.

Thanks to the largesse of big business, the ticket price was made affordable for employees who could also avail themselves of a special payroll deduction plan.

The evening was designed to be thoroughly enjoyed - great music, great food, and a minimum of speeches (none of which was over two minutes in length) Also there was a surprise visit from Broadway. Brenda Braxton, star of "Smokey Joe's Cafe" and five members of the cast (still in costume) crossed the Hudson after their evening show and performed for NCC's 800 + appreciative audience. Truly, it was an affair to remember.

NEW START FOR NCC

Newark New Start (NNS) is a collaborative effort between the division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) and New Community. It is funded by a grant from the Abandoned Infants Administration of the U. S Department of Health and Human Services.

The Boarder Baby population in Essex County hospitals is very high. Most of these babies have medical clearance to be released; however, parents are unable to care for the infants. Youth, family living conditions, homelessness, substance abuse, and/or a combination of these problems mean that babies must remain their hospital cribs.

NCC's New Start Program, in its first year of operation, helped 165 families. A variety of services were offered to pregnant women who were assessed to be at risk of giving birth to a Boarder Baby.

Prevention and intervention included referrals to Family Advocates and to community volunteers. Through these organizations the mother was assisted in coordinating her services with those of her child. Home assessment clarified the mother/family problem and needed services were determined.

NCC does not have as much red tape to unravel as most government agencies, therefore, clients referred to NCC New Start had babies discharged within 2.2 days after medical clearance. Clients referred to DFYS waited for 10.9 days for babies to be discharged.

Babies whose problem families have no intervention have been known to languish in hospital for weeks and months. NCC's aim is to avoid this form of " child abuse " whenever possible.

SPRING BREAK

Nine very willing and enthusiastic students from Loyola University, Baltimore, MD. spent their Spring Break with NCC.

They were billeted in two empty apartments in a senior housing development. Their furniture consisted of a table, chairs, dishes, two lamps, and sleeping bags. Students bought and cooked their own food in the fully equipped kitchen (stove, refrigerator, sink, and a few pots.)

During their NCC stay, they did some landscaping - raking, mulching, removing stone and pebbles, etc. While interviewing residents, they helped many to update their Vial of Life data as well as to fill out NCC's latest survey, How Am I Doing? In the process, one young lady learned how to cook collard greens.

The students, who came to give, went back to Loyola realizing how much they had received.



Loyola students enjoying their Spring rake.

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